

Home Worship January 17th Second Sunday after Epiphany

Welcome to worship. There are no major announcements today. The church council will meet on zoom next Thursday due to an internet issue last week.

Confession and Forgiveness

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✚ one God, whose voice is upon the waters, whose mercy is poured out upon all people, whose goodness cascades over all creation. **Amen.** Let us confess our sin, trusting in the abundant grace of God.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Holy God, you search us and know us. You are acquainted with all our ways. We confess that our hearts are burdened by sin— our own sins and the broken systems that bind us. We turn inward, failing to follow your outward way of love. We distrust those who are not like us. We exploit the earth and its resources and fail to consider generations to come. Forgive us, gracious God, for all we have done and left undone. Even before the words are on our tongues, you know them; receive them in your divine mercy. **Amen.**

How vast is God's grace! Through the power and promise of ✚ Christ Jesus, our sins are washed away and we are claimed as God's own beloved. Indeed, we are forgiven. In the wake of God's forgiveness, we are called to be the beloved community living out Christ's justice and the Spirit's reconciling peace. **Amen.**

Prayer of the Day

Thanks be to you, Lord Jesus Christ, most merciful redeemer, for the countless blessings and benefits you give. May we know you more clearly, love you more dearly, and follow you more nearly, day by day praising you, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

First Reading: 1 Samuel 3:1-10

At a time when visions are rare and unexpected, the LORD comes to Samuel and calls him to speak the divine word. Though just a boy, Samuel responds to God obediently, as Eli the priest has taught him to respond. This marks the beginning of Samuel's prophetic ministry.

¹Now the boy Samuel was ministering to the LORD under Eli. The word of the LORD was rare in those days; visions were not widespread.

- ²At that time Eli, whose eyesight had begun to grow dim so that he could not see, was lying down in his room;
- ³the lamp of God had not yet gone out, and Samuel was lying down in the temple of the LORD, where the ark of God was.
- ⁴Then the LORD called, “Samuel! Samuel!” and he said, “Here I am!”
- ⁵and ran to Eli, and said, “Here I am, for you called me.” But he said, “I did not call; lie down again.” So he went and lay down.
- ⁶The LORD called again, “Samuel!” Samuel got up and went to Eli, and said, “Here I am, for you called me.” But he said, “I did not call, my son; lie down again.”
- ⁷Now Samuel did not yet know the LORD, and the word of the LORD had not yet been revealed to him.
- ⁸The LORD called Samuel again, a third time. And he got up and went to Eli, and said, “Here I am, for you called me.” Then Eli perceived that the LORD was calling the boy.
- ⁹Therefore Eli said to Samuel, “Go, lie down; and if he calls you, you shall say, ‘Speak, LORD, for your servant is listening.’” So Samuel went and lay down in his place.

Psalm 139:1-6

- ¹**LORD, you have searched me out; O LORD, you have known me.**
- ²You know my sitting down and my rising up; you discern my thoughts from afar.
- ³**You trace my journeys and my resting-places and are acquainted with all my ways.**
- ⁴Indeed, there is not a word on my lips, but you, O LORD, know it altogether.
- ⁵**You encompass me, behind and before, and lay your hand upon me.**
- ⁶Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is so high that I cannot attain to it.

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 6:12-20

Paul helps the Corinthians understand that God has claimed the entirety of their lives through the death of Christ. Hence Christian relationships and conduct, including areas of human sexuality, are to reflect the reality that we belong to Christ and that the Holy Spirit lives within us.

- ¹²“All things are lawful for me,” but not all things are beneficial. “All things are lawful for me,” but I will not be dominated by anything.
- ¹³“Food is meant for the stomach and the stomach for food,” and God will destroy both one and the other. The body is meant not for fornication but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body.
- ¹⁴And God raised the Lord and will also raise us by his power.

¹⁵Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Should I therefore take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Never!

¹⁶Do you not know that whoever is united to a prostitute becomes one body with her? For it is said, “The two shall be one flesh.”

¹⁷But anyone united to the Lord becomes one spirit with him.

¹⁸Shun fornication! Every sin that a person commits is outside the body; but the fornicator sins against the body itself.

¹⁹Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God, and that you are not your own?

²⁰For you were bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body.

The Holy Gospel according to John 1:43-51 Glory to you O Lord

In John’s gospel, Jesus’ ministry begins with the call of disciples, who then bring others to Jesus. Philip’s friend Nathanael moves from skepticism to faith when he accepts the invitation to “Come and see.”

⁴³The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, “Follow me.”

⁴⁴Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter.

⁴⁵Philip found Nathanael and said to him, “We have found him about whom Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus son of Joseph from Nazareth.”

⁴⁶Nathanael said to him, “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?” Philip said to him, “Come and see.”

⁴⁷When Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward him, he said of him, “Here is truly an Israelite in whom there is no deceit!”

⁴⁸Nathanael asked him, “Where did you get to know me?” Jesus answered, “I saw you under the fig tree before Philip called you.”

⁴⁹Nathanael replied, “Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!”

⁵⁰Jesus answered, “Do you believe because I told you that I saw you under the fig tree? You will see greater things than these.”

⁵¹And he said to him, “Very truly, I tell you, you will see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.”

The word of the Lord..... **Praise to you O Christ**

Sermon

I recently had a conversation with someone who watches this worship every week who said to me “*Pastor, you seemed to be more upbeat last week in worship*”. She was right. Sometimes I feel as though I am going through the motions. I thought about it and realized it

was probably because I had spoken with someone who is not a member of St. Mark's who told me that she likes my worship and watches it faithfully every week along with her home congregation. I was flattered. I realized that people are really listening so I should cheer up!

Because of this pandemic, virtual worship has become the norm and it's a challenge. I am not a social media person and I realize our worship is very simple because of it. Occasionally someone responds or likes the presentation but more often there is no response. So I admit to those watching or listening that I have always thrived on recognition I joined the theatre group as a teenager and have always been in front of people in one way or another. Without recognition, well, let's just say I am not as cheerful. I explored it with a psychologist at great expense and it's a fact...I rise to any occasion with positive recognition. I also believe that there is some need for recognition in all of us. There certainly was a need for recognition for Nathanael in today's gospel.

Having just invited Andrew and Peter to go to Galilee with him, Jesus "*found*" Philip. Philip, a new disciple, was so impressed he invites a friend Nathanael to "*come and see.*" ⁴⁷*When Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward him, Jesus said about him (Nathaniel), "Here is truly an Israelite in whom there is no deceit!"* ⁴⁸*Nathanael asked him, "Where did you get to know me?" Jesus answered, "I saw you under the fig tree before Philip called you."* Nathanael was recognized by Jesus and became a disciple. We all want to be recognized by God.

What happens next to Jesus and the disciples is full of ups and downs, questions and apprehension. When we were baptized and confirmed in faith, like these disciples, the future was being prepared before us. We probably didn't know what we were getting ourselves and neither did the disciples.

Philip knows little about Jesus and yet...he has seen Jesus' face. That seems to be enough. So Philip finds Nathanael, who is skeptical. Philip just engages Nathanael and says "*Come and see*". Philip witnesses to him not by pushing him or talking to him endlessly but just a simple "*Come and see*". Our calling is always to Come and See. We are called to go to others, to those not really expecting us. When we do, we find both Jesus and ourselves there.

A rich person was visiting Calcutta India and met Mother Teresa, a Roman Catholic nun working there. The rich woman pulled out her checkbook and asked "*How can I help you in your work?*" Mother Teresa pushed the checkbook back into the woman's purse, took her by the hand and said, "*Come and see.*" She led the woman into an impoverished area, and found a hungry, frail child. "*Care for her.*" The woman took the child in her lap, wiped her face, and fed her. The woman was changed. Mother Teresa was right when she said "*When we care for a child, we are caring for Jesus. When we love the unloved, we are loving Jesus.*" The recognition of those in need brings us out of ourselves. Out of our comfort and into discipleship.

It's all well and good to send a check or make an online contribution for those in need. It's extraordinary discipleship when we can hands-on help someone face-to-face.

The rich woman in India saw the face of the child and in that face, her opportunity to see the face of Christ. Philip sees the face of Jesus and begins to gather his friends to follow. Their lives would never be the same. What do we see when we see a face? This weekend we celebrate the wisdom and courage of Dr .Martin Luther King Jr. Reverend King dreamed of a day when we could see the color of a face and not judge the color of the face but rather the “*content of character*” inside the whole of the person. In the context of our culture today, we are also still dreaming that dream.

Jesus recognizes all our faces and the content of our character. We are all recognized by God everyday and in every way. We are called to “*come and follow*” and we are called to “*come and see*” what we can do for others in this calling.

In John's story, Nathanael becomes the first disciple to call Jesus the Son of God and King of Israel. We remember and recognize Philip as the first missionary, the one who invites his friend Nathanael to come and see Jesus. In this dark and cold midwinter, we could use a push to “*come and see*”. We remember how God recognizes us, finds us and calls us to follow. We too, have seen the face of God in our relationship with Jesus. Amen.

Prayers of Intercession

Guided by Christ made known to the nations, let us offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all people in need. ***A brief silence.*** For the body of Christ gathered throughout the world and for all servants of the gospel, that following Jesus, the church lives out its calling every day, let us pray. **Have mercy, O God.**

For the well-being of creation, for plants and animals, and for all that God has marvelously made, that we serve as wise stewards of Earth, our home, let us pray. **Have mercy, O God.**

For police officers and firefighters, for attorneys and paralegals, for peacekeepers and military personnel, and for the leaders of governments, that they provide protection to all people, especially the most vulnerable, let us pray. **Have mercy, O God.**

For those lacking food or shelter, for those who are sick or grieving, and for those who are imprisoned or homebound, that God console all who suffer. We pray for those who need healing ***especially those recovering from surgery and Brad Shippert. We pray for the families suffering with the coronavirus and we pray for an end to the virus with safe vaccinations and treatments. We pray for those in care facilities: Sibyl, Barb, Tammy, Trudy, Jessica, Hazel, Jeanne, Linda, Ed and Marian. We pray for those in military service: Logan, JJ, Bryan, Dustin, Brad and Travis*** let us pray. **Have mercy, O God.**

In thanksgiving for the saints who have gone before us, that their lives give us a vision of the gospel in action, let us pray. **Have mercy, O God.**

Merciful God, hear the prayers of your people, spoken or silent, for the sake of the one who dwells among us, your Son, Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

Prayer for Offering

O God, receive these gifts as you receive us: like a mother receives her child, with arms open wide. Nourish us anew in your tender care, and empower us in faithful service to tend to others with this same love, through Jesus Christ, our saving grace. **Amen.**

Gathered into one by the power of the Holy Spirit we pray as Jesus taught ...

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

Invitation to Communion

Beloved: here is bread; here is wine. Here is Jesus. Come and be fed.

Holy Communion Together

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. By the leading of a star he was shown forth to all nations; in the waters of the Jordan you proclaimed him your beloved Son; and in the miracle of water turned to wine he revealed your glory.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me. Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

For as often as we eat of this bread and drink from this cup, we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Take your bread/cracker

The body of Christ given for you

Take you juice/wine/water

The blood of Christ shed for you

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in His grace.

Prayer after Communion

Christ Jesus, at this table we have feasted on your very life and are strengthened for our journey. Send us forth from this banquet nourished in body and in spirit to proclaim your good news and serve others in your name. **Amen.**

Blessing

God the creator strengthen you; Jesus the beloved fill you; and the Holy Spirit the comforter ✠ keep you in peace. **Amen.**

Dismissal

Go in peace. Be the light of Christ. **Thanks be to God.**

Thank you to all who continue to support the work of the church.

Stay in touch. Please call if you or someone you know needs help and or prayer.